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DIT:Students Union

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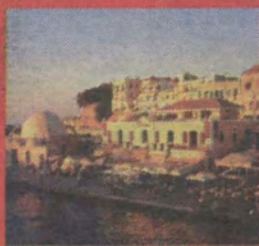
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Student's drink spiked at ball

By Niamh O'Donoghue

DIT student, Lyndsey Jones woke up in hospital, dazed and confused, with a tube down her throat. Her memories of that Thursday night came creeping back to her. Her concerned friends had called an ambulance when she collapsed at the Kevin Street / Mountjoy Square Freshers' Ball at the Temple. It was discovered that Lyndsey's drink had been spiked with sleeping and epileptic tablets.

The doctor said the culprits knew what they were doing as they went to great efforts to mix and powder down the substance. He explained the objective was to keep her under for as long as possible

and Lyndsey was lucky she did not experience the full effect of the drugs. "I was thinking about it after, I just thought, my god, what just happened. I'm so careful when I go out, I bring my drinks everywhere," said Lyndsey.

The part-time Students' Union officer hadn't intended to go out that night, but her friends persuaded her to go to the ball. "I didn't have that much to drink, just a half-pint of Bud and about three bottles of Smirnoff Ice because I'm not that big into drinking," she said. Downstairs, she chatted with girls from her old school. "I had a drink in my hand and I said, I'll be back in second, here hold on to that and I

went off to the bathroom," she explained. "So I came back and just picked up a bottle that was on the bar. I didn't even know if it was mine cause there was so many bottles there, so I just picked it up and carried on drinking and talking to the lads."

At about one o'clock Lyndsey began to feel the effects. "It was hard to breathe, I'd never fainted before and I thought I was going to faint," she said. "I had no concept of what was going on around me, I just felt like I need to get out of here and I was so limp, tired and sleepy. I really just wanted to go to bed; I needed to get out. I felt so weak. I knew I had to sit down." Her

friends helped her downstairs where they rang an ambulance. "They couldn't believe it was me. Anybody that knows me knows I don't do drugs or anything like that - I just don't see the point," she said.

"I can't even remember what time I woke at. I was lying there and I was so incoherent. I could hear the nurses asking me was I okay, could I do this, could I do that, but I just couldn't, I was

so limp, I just couldn't do anything they asked."

The nurses informed her that she was out cold for about an hour and a half. "Only for the lads had been there, I can honestly say I really don't know what would have happened to me," she said. "I'm so lucky that I wasn't picked up by somebody I didn't know. It's a scary thought to know that I've come so close to it, I think everyone was so

shocked that they knew the person that it had happened to and reality sort of hit home."

As a result of this incident, the Kevin Street Student Welfare office are setting up an awareness campaign in the lead-up to the Christmas ball. DITSU president Vinny Dooley has also expressed his concern about spiked drinks. He has urged people to be very careful with their drinks and not leave them unattended.

Boys come first

By Aoife Stokes

NEW figures from the Higher Education Authority (HEA) show that male students get the majority of first class honours degrees.

Figures indicate girls out-perform boys at secondary level, which leads to female students out-numbering males at third level by over 1,000.

However, the male students bridge that gap at third level and achieve most of the top marks.

It must be noted that first class honours make up only 7 per cent of degrees awarded each year.

These figures can be further explained by the fact that male students tend to take courses where high marks are available. In courses such as engineering, a large number of first-class honours degrees are awarded. In the universities researched, males far outnumber the female students in these faculties.

The marking of exams for these courses is quite clear.

Continued on page 3



"You call me fat?" Sumo wrestler wannabe in plump plummet!

Another sportsday passes

By Dermot Keyes

THEY sumo wrestled, fenced, ran, kicked, tackled, shot hoops and slapped sliotars all in the name of sport... and fun. The DIT Sportsday at the ALSAA complex on October 4th was another enjoyable start-of-year jamboree for both the hardened competitor and the merrymaking messers among the sporting student populous.

Those of the karting persuasion took to the Kylemore Track tarmac, where chicanes were careered,

corners were cut and wee first years mixed it with the seasoned semi-amateurish experts who dream of greater days and bigger cars in Monza.

Every imaginable sport was catered for as always by the organising team, which must be commended for the fine and orderly fashion that accompanied the running of each sport. Be it Olympic handball, squash, underwater rugby (I kid you not!) or judo, virtually every sport to whet the student's palate was catered for. *Sports: 18,19*



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The Overall View



Vinny Dooley

WELL another year another union, and on behalf of myself and the rest of the Student Union Executive may I wish you all the very best for the year to come, and what a year it is going to be!

So did you all survive freshers week? Good, well I hope that you had an amazing time and that all went well. So here we are at the end of October and you would think that all would be very quiet, not a bit of it!!

It was part-time election time and at this point may I congratulate all the successful candidates and welcome them to the students' union. To those who were unsuccessful thanks and fair play for running.

Secondly, yes the only college to successfully take on the Point Depot (that's us by the way!) is doing it again with a six-hour music festival to brighten up your Halloween. Where do I start, The Four Of Us - one of the long standing Irish bands who have only this week released their greatest hits album.

Then on to Space, the Liverpool lads with a long list of UK and Irish hits. Next, Aurora and Naimee Coleman with their big hit Ordinary World, following on from them our Head to Head special.

In the Red corner Mr. Robbie Butler (Redbox), in the Blue corner Mr. Al Gibbs (POD) with Referee for the night Shovel, the percussionist from M People in the middle keeping the beat going!

Headlining, Mr Nick Warren from Cream and Homelands, when you hear him you will know why he is one of the best in the world. All this for only £15! You would be insane to miss it.

In the coming weeks we have class rep, part-time and clubs and socs training. So keep your eyes open.

While you were away during the summer all the officers were undergoing comprehensive training to enable them to deal with whatever problems may arise during the year. So make sure and get in contact with us if you have any queries or want help on anything from running a class party to having difficulties with your lecturers.

DITSU is not only the largest and most successful union in the country it is also the strongest. However our strength is based on the involvement of our members - you. So get involved.

Until our next edition,
Take Care

Vinny

Mountjoy Square duo launch campus.ie

PADRAIG Staunton who graduated from DIT Mountjoy Sq. in 1999 is the founder of Campus.ie, the complete website for students in Ireland. Padraig is a former Students Union Deputy Vice President of DIT Mountjoy Sq. Students' Union.

Brenda Donohoe, a final year marketing student in DIT, Mountjoy Square worked on the project throughout the summer months until launch.

The company, which employs 10, was officially launched recently by Mary O'Rourke TD, Minister for Public Enterprise. Campus.ie offers Irish students a range of free online services and information.

The main offering is "MyLocker"!, a free online locker containing e-mail, a personal planner and document storage space. Document

storage space means that students working in a college computer room will not have to store their work e.g. theses on floppy disks and risk losing their work. Campus.ie is also offering a range of information services including part-time jobs listings, national news and sport, entertainment listings and health information.

Local information will be customised to a student's college so they will only see material relevant to them on the site. This makes Campus.ie 33 sites in one as it is customised to 33 colleges in Ireland.

The following companies and organisations have partnered with Campus.ie to deliver information direct to students - Deloitte & Touche, Graphite HRM, Advance Vision, Filmhouse, Ticketmaster, Gamezone.ie and Clubbing.com.



Padraig Staunton, Mary O'Rourke TD and Brenda Donohoe at the launch of Campus.ie. Photograph: Maxwells

Programme offers opportunities to disadvantaged students

By Samantha Rowntree

DIT's Lifelong Education Access Programme (LEAP) was launched by the Minister for Education & Science, Dr Michael Woods, and president of the Dublin Institute of Technology, Dr Brendan Goldsmith, on October 9th in Fitzwilliam House.

LEAP aims to give more access to disadvantaged school leavers, students with disabilities and mature students. Under this new programme, DIT hopes that from 2005, 100 students will have access to whole-time DIT courses each year.

Speaking at the launch, Dr Goldsmith highlighted the need for educational institutions to play a primary role in breaking down the barriers to access.

"There's no easy solution to this fundamentally important problem, no simple quick response which will reverse economic and cultural forces which have been at play for generations," he said. "It is therefore vitally important to have a genuinely co-operative approach involving the whole range of institutions and social partners".

Dr Woods said "as we face into the future, where knowledge and adaptable skills become increasingly important to the labour market, the challenge for our education system is significant. Educational opportunity is the key to employment opportunity and if we are to help marginalised groups to participate in our growing prosperity, we must use education as a tool".

"The Government has made its commitment to address under representation at third level clear by allocating £95m over the period 2000-2006 to tackle the problem," Dr Woods continued. "However, all must contribute if policies are to be effective: individual institutions, government, policy makers, special interest groups and those sections of



Peter Brown, LEAP co-ordinator with Dr Michael Woods, Minister for Education and Dr Brendan Goldsmith, President of DIT at the launch of LEAP

government departments and specialist agencies that have a direct interest or responsibility for equity in education in all its forms".

The Institute's Access Officer, Mr Peter Brown, also unveiled the college's plans to develop a bridging programme to target school leavers and mature students. This will cater for participants who require a further year of study before embarking on a whole-time course in the DIT.

The bridging course will concentrate on core subjects like maths, English and computer skills.

There will also be a strong emphasis on personal development and personal skills. Students who successfully complete the course will be then guaranteed entry to a whole time DIT course.

Sheila Harrington, DIT's Disability Liaison Officer, hopes that it will help students with disability to re-enter the education system. She believes it gives people with

disabilities the opportunities, "to be a tax payer rather than just receiving social welfare". Ms Harrington, has been asked to join the Forum of People with Disabilities in recognition of the multi level diverse approach to third level education that DIT offers.

The launch follows a pilot programme initiated by DIT in 1999. LEAP is a strand of the Community Links Programme in DIT, which seeks to address educational disadvantage in Dublin's inner city. Mr Thomas Cooke, co-ordinator of Community Education Links, acknowledges that, "for the small number of inner city young people who do manage to secure a place in third level, financial difficulties will frequently prevent them taking up this place".

DIT will provide this support to participants both financially and academically, including personal support through peer monitoring and study workshops.

Boys come first

By Aoife Stokes

from page 1

The questions are either right or wrong with very little discretion required on the part of the examiner. Female students tend to choose Humanities-based degrees, where the marking is more at the discretion of the examiner.

In response to these figures, Julian de Spinn, President of the Union of Students of Ireland (USI), has called for further investigation of the matter by both universities and the HEA.

Mr de Spinn described the under performance of females at third level as perplexing.

Andrea Leahy, Women's Rights Officer of USI, cited a Welsh report, carried out by Prof. Catherine Belsey in this area.

"Without further research in this area, it is impossible to say conclusively what the causes are. However, we do know that in University College, Cardiff, female students were being under-marked before the introduction of anonymous marking," she said.

"A study by Prof. Catherine Belsey in that university found that prior to the introduction of anonymous marking men out-performed women and after its introduction women out-performed men. We must have similar studies in Ireland."

Ms Leahy continued, "We also know that only 5 per cent of professors and less than 20 per cent of senior lecturers in our universities are women."

"Again the question must be asked: is this gender imbalance a contributory factor in female under performance?"

The USI is calling on all colleges to employ a qualified Equality Officer to implement an Equality Policy and an Equality Action Plan.

That female performance is lowered in a co-educational environment like a university is often put forward as an explanation for figures such as these.

However this is generally disregarded by psychologists who put the change down to males maturing between 18 and 22 hence improving their academic performance.

Programme to provide personal support

By Samantha Rowntree

PEER Mentoring is a new pilot programme that aims to provide first-year students with the support and guidance they need to get accustomed to college life. It has long been acknowledged that students find the first few months of college a bit of a struggle.

Whether it's that a student can't get used to living away from home, or that their course seems a bit daunting, the advice programme will offer students some reassurance that college life is not so bad after all.

The Peer Mentoring programme, which models itself on the American "buddy system", recruits and trains mentors from second year to befriend new students. The programme



James O'Brien (left) and Sean King, Peer Mentors, with Dr Brendan Goldsmith, DIT president

contacted students during the summer and received a good response. So far, the programme has about 30 mentors who have completed

a training weekend in Glendalough, where they were trained in listening and advising skills by DIT's counselling service. The

mentors are not expected to offer a counselling service, but if a student has particular problems, they can advise them on the best people to

approach. Mr Peter Brown, co-ordinator of DIT's new LEAP programme, feels peer mentoring will be of particular benefit to students from disadvantaged backgrounds as they often feel they don't fit in.

"New students particularly appreciate the support from someone of roughly their own age, who's clearly been through the same experience."

Mr Brown has found all the mentors hugely enthusiastic but was surprised at the low level of response from students in Kevin Street to take part. He admits the programme is dependent on people's goodwill to get involved. Sheila Harrington,

DIT's Disability Liaison Officer, says, "disabled

students are delighted with the peer mentoring programme as it's a new way for them to move out of second level education and not find themselves isolated at third level".

As DIT is very much mainstreamed students with disabilities often find themselves isolated, peer mentoring offers the support to prevent this happening.

Ms Maura Finnegan, a researcher on the student retention project, believes: "It's necessary to ascertain the problems students have in the first few weeks. "Then a mentor can be assigned to meet with a student informally once a week". It's hoped that the scheme will be a success and continue long-term to assist all first-years in DIT.

DITSU presents Spellbound

Thursday Oct 26th

Featuring:
The Four of Us
Space

Aurora featuring Naimee Coleman
DJs Al Gibbs and Robbie Butler with
Shovel from M People
and Top DJ Nick Warren

The Point Depot
Doors open 8pm,
No entry after 10pm
Tickets £22.50 (students £15)
available from SU shops

Low figures reported for meningitis vaccination

By Dermot Keyes

FIRST-YEAR students who wished to avail of the Government-backed Meningitis C Immunisation Programme in DIT have received vaccinations during the first two weeks of October at the Bolton Street and Aungier Street sites.

However, despite an advertising campaign and 11 deaths in Ireland in 1999 among the youth population, it appears that DIT students did not flock to the provided vaccination centres, with one health centre member describing the response as poor.

The vaccination is part of a Department of Health programme to immunise everyone in Ireland up to the age of 22 against the Meningococcal Group C infection, more commonly known as Group C Meningitis and septicaemia. Approximately 1.3 million people are covered by the immunisation.

Despite the Government allocating £25 million to the programme, the response that the Minister for Health, Mr Michael Martin, would have envisaged among the student population has not come to pass, at least amongst DIT attendants.

At the time of going to press, an exact figure of those who were vaccinated were not made available to the DIT Independent, despite requests made to both Bolton Street and Aungier Street Health Centres.

DIT Administrator Mr Robert Lawlor said the Eastern Regional Health Authority was responsible for recording the number of vaccinations. The ERHA did not have a spokesperson available when contacted.

Mr Lawlor commented the reported low acceptance of the vaccination was not surprising. "You have to take into consideration that this was a voluntary vaccination and there was certain to be many students who did not want to be vaccinated."

"But it must be stated that many of the covered people in DIT might have got the vaccination already from their GP in other health board areas," he continued.

"The idea of providing the vaccination at the colleges was to allow those who may have slipped through the net or simply did not know about it earlier, to receive the vaccination."

Despite not covering all DIT students eligible by age under the scheme, there are no plans for further vaccination centres to be provided during the year.

DIT Independent

Welcome to the first issue this year of the DIT Independent. It proved to be very popular last year and as editor I hope that we can continue and expand on last year success. This is a student newspaper for and by students so it is important that there is participation and interest from the students of DIT.

We aim to cover issues of importance for students. In our news section we will look at and investigate issues are events that are happening at the moment within DIT, which affect the students. Our sports section will cover all of the latest events and games.

The Entertainment pages will feature all of the latest in music and our film expert gives his knowledgeable opinion on all of the latest film releases. I hope you will all enjoy reading the paper through out the year and any suggestions will gratefully accepted.

I'm sure everyone has heard reports and stories about the dangers of date rape drugs and drinks being spiked in night-clubs. You may even know of someone, a friend of a friend, who had a bad experience. How often have your parents warned you before a night out not to leave your drink unattended?

But do we really pay attention, or does it all just go over our heads? You might read a story in a national newspaper about someone whose drink was spiked and think "that's terrible" but you probably also think, "that would never happen to me". Don't be so sure. That is probably what Lyndsey Jones, a part-time student officer in Kevin Street, thought and she was wrong.

Lyndsey was out for a night with her friends at a college-organised event. She only left her drink for a minute to go to the bathroom but even this was too long. She woke up a few hours later in a hospital bed; unable to remember how she got there.

Lyndsey was lucky she was with friends who helped her out of the night-club and called an ambulance. God knows what could have happened to her if she had been by herself.

Perhaps the most frightening aspect of this story is that Lyndsey was at an event organised by the college, attended by fellow students. You may think that things like this only happen on a Saturday night out on the town in a dodgy night-spot but obviously not.

Whoever was responsible did not do this for a joke, they knew what they were doing. Lyndsey's drink was spiked with a dangerous cocktail of sleeping and epileptic tablets, powered down so as not to be noticed.

You may think that when you are on a night out in town with your friends, that is when you need to be careful, not when you are out at a college ball. However Lyndsey's story shows that we must be careful all the time.

This is a frightening story and it brings the message home that bad things can happen to anyone. It shows how careful we need to be in order to ensure our personal safety.

In the coming weeks, an awareness campaign will be launched by the Kevin Street Students Union to warn students about the danger of leaving drinks unattended. However it is vital that all Student's Unions do the same. It is essential that students in every college are aware of the dangers.

Hopefully Lyndsey's story will make us all more aware of this danger and perhaps prevent the same thing happening again

It is the policy of the DIT Independent to correct any inaccuracies as soon as they occur. An corrections or clarifications will be printed in the next edition of the newspaper. It is also the policy of the DIT Independent to offer the right of reply to any person who feels aggrieved by comment or opinion contained within. Please forward any such comments in writing to the Editor. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect the policies of the Students' Union.

The DIT Independent

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USI sells stake in USIT

The Union of Students in Ireland will make £9 million from the sale of its stake in the student travel company, USIT, writes Lisa Deeney. However, they are not planning to share the money with its student members as it is "already ear-marked in different areas".

USI plans to buy a new state-of-art headquarters in Dublin for about £2 million and invest the remainder of the windfall in a portfolio of shares and other investments to improve its overall services.

The union has no plans to distribute a proportion to its members, or to reduce the membership fee.

USI president, Julian de Sp-inn believes that the money will secure the future of Ireland's student movement. "The money has been already ear-marked into different areas such as new

USI headquarters, develop staffing structures and a small proportion is to develop services such as student research and training," he said.

For a union facing bankruptcy a few years ago, following legal action over abortion information, it has been completely transformed by the expansion in student travel and the corresponding growth of USIT.

USIT is controlled by a group of business people led by the chairman of the Sunday Tribune, Mr Gordon Colleary.

Recently he commented it was logical that USI would want to sell their shares and focus on their services to Irish students. A 10-year co-operation agreement is in place, so USI will continue to work closely with USIT. USI will also retain four of the eight seats of the board of USIT Now (Ireland), and both intend to



sponsor new international student identity cards.

There is speculation that USIT may initiate a flotation on the stock exchange, possibly as early as next year. In this event, students and USIT staff will be offered shares at a discount.

Fresher's walk for Chernobyl

By Aisling Casey

THE plight of Chernobyl children was aptly reflected at the launch of the largest student charity event ever, "The Fresher's 10k Walk" on September 21st. The Chernobyl Children's Project, in conjunction with the Union of Students in Ireland (USI) and sponsors Bank of Ireland, is to further the pace of development in their ongoing campaign for increased funding for Chernobyl with a new fund raising initiative.

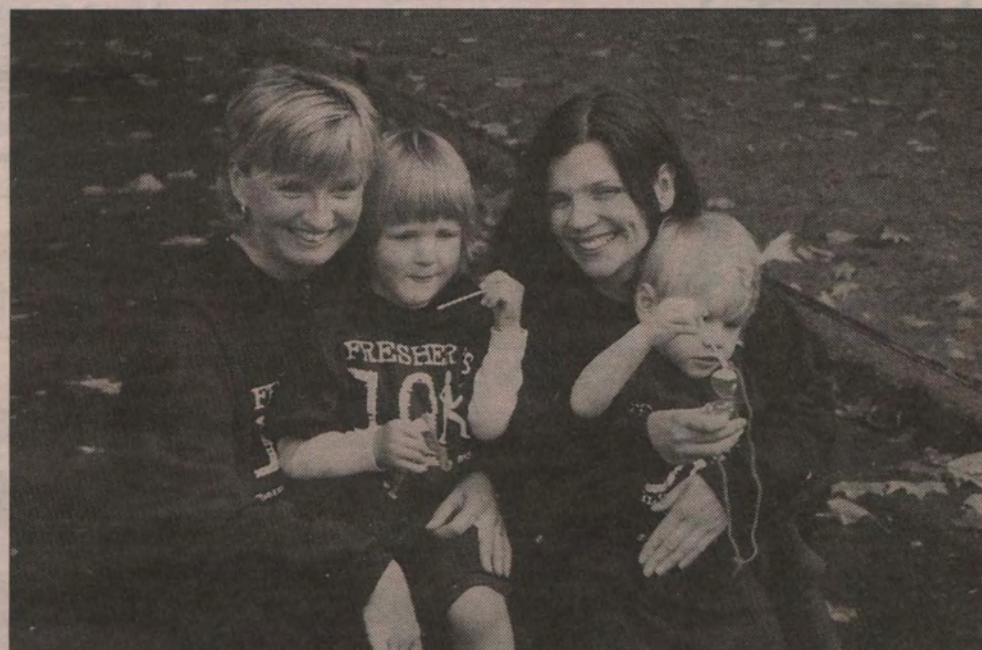
They are calling all first-year students in Irish colleges to take part in a sponsored walk on November 16th.

Adi Roche, executive director, and Ali Hewson, patron of the Chernobyl Children's Project, attended the launch. Speaking at the launch, Ms Roche paid tribute to USI and Bank of Ireland. "The money raised by the 'Fresher's 10k Walk' will mean that the Chernobyl Children's Project will be in a position to reach many other children and make a difference to their lives," she said.

Ms Roche emphasised the generosity of the Irish people, but informed the public that scientists predict the worst effects of Chernobyl will not be felt in the region for another 20 years. "The support of USI and Bank of Ireland gives us a much needed boost at a time when the world's attention needs to be focused on the ongoing devastation in Chernobyl," she said.

Two children from Belarus, Marguireta Marozava and Antonia Ryan, were at St Stephen's Green to help launch the event.

Marguireta, aged 5, is in Ireland as part of the Chernobyl Children's Project "Long Term Care"



Adi Roche, executive director, and Ali Hewson, patron of the Chernobyl Children's Project attended the launch

Programme. She was abandoned at birth, suffering from loss of hearing and a heart murmur as a direct result of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster in 1986. Due to the Chernobyl Children's Project negotiating an agreement between the Belarussian and Irish governments to bring her to Ireland to undergo expert medical care, Marguireta has regained full hearing and no longer has a heart complaint. Antonia was also abandoned at birth, but with the help of the project was adopted by an Irish family last month.

USI are urging as many of the 30,000 first year students as possible to take part in the event. Julian De Sp-inn, President of USI, said, "We want the Fresher's 10k Walk to be the largest student charity event ever".

Mr de Sp-inn said the response to the event so far has been excellent. "But this can only be built upon by stu-

dents raising the money needed to help this stricken area of the world," he said. "We are asking each to raise £75 by getting parents, brothers, sisters, relatives, work-mates and friends to fill their sponsorship cards."

As a sign of their commitment to the event, Bank of Ireland will donate £1 to the charity for every third level student account opened in their bank this year. Kevin Burke of Bank of Ireland said, "It is great to see so many students giving selflessly of their time for a great cause".

In conjunction with USI, the walk was initiated and is being directed by DIT lecturer Joe McGrath. DIT is also heavily involved in the event. "It is nice to see students giving something back to society," said DITSU President Vincent Dooley.

In an effort to promote the event, a campaign co-ordina-

tor has been assigned to each college. The project has also begun a poster campaign, which reveals hard-line facts. One reads "screaming children have to be strapped to chairs while traumatised surgeons battle to remove cancerous tumours with no anaesthetic."

According to Vincent Dooley, DIT will be pushing for support over the first two weeks of November.

Although the aim is £75, students are encouraged to raise as much money as they can over the next few weeks. "It is only a 10k walk at your own pace and it will be a good day out for everyone," he added.

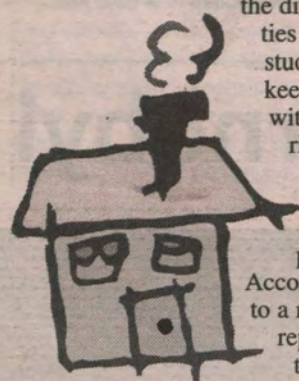
Students from senior years are also welcome to get involved in the event. Registration cards are available at the Students Union in all DIT colleges.

Focus on . . . accommodation

10,000 extra students look for housing

Every year, students around the country are faced with the daunting task of finding suitable and affordable accommodation. This year the problem has been exacerbated with rising rent prices and an estimated additional 10,000 students in the rented accommodation sector.

Despite the increase in students looking for rented accommodation, nothing has been done to address



the difficulties facing students to keep up with the rising rent

prices. According to a recent report of the

The DIT Independent looks at the issue of student accommodation

Commission on Private Rented Residential Sector, there has been an increase of 60% in the number of privately renting households from 1991 to 1997.

However most of this increase has been in the luxury end of the market which students can not afford to live in.

The increase of students into the private rented sector has also been matched with a decrease in living standards for them.

It is not uncommon for students to live three or more to a room. I'm sure you can talk to any student who has ever looked for accommodation and I'm sure they can tell you some horror stories.

On average students can proba-

bly expect to pay around £50 to £60 pounds a week for living space.

Most students have to work during the college year just in order to survive and make their rent. Just to make a weeks rent, a student making £5 an hour would have to work at least 10 hours just to make enough to cover their rent let alone food, bills and transport.

In fact over a quarter of students who took part in the USI survey said that financial pressures were the most common cause for dropping out of college.

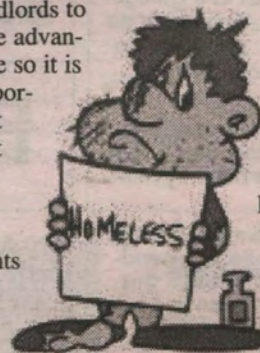
While accommodation is a problem for student's nation-wide, particularly those attending a college in Dublin, it is worse for students

attending DIT as there is no campus accommodation provided by the college.

However this is hardly surprising when we take into account that overall only 6% of Irish students are housed in on campus accommodation. This is a disgrace when compared with 28% in the UK and 17% in Europe.

Students are an easy group for unscrupulous landlords to take advantage so it is important that

rights and



you know your

what you are entitled to. If there is anything you are unsure of, contact your students union and they will help you out.

Also it is essential that you read any lease or agreement fully before you sign anything.

DIT students are advised under no circumstances are they to book accommodation without viewing it first. First year students who are living away from home for the first time are advised by the Student's Union to pick digs as their first choice.

On average, for a seven-day week, students can expect to pay around £70 with meals included.

There is a DIT Accommodation List, which is produced by the Student's Union on a weekly basis. This includes details of normal flats and houses as well as lodgings accommodation.

What you say . . .



Elaine Keogh, 1st Year, Kevin Street.

"My apartment is two and a half miles from college and I have to walk for at least 3/4 of an hour to get in, but it was all I could get. The rent is a bit expensive, and the place is really small".

Claire Ivory, 1st Year, Kevin Street.

"I got the DIT student accommodation list the day I was offered my place, and I rang everywhere, but every single place was gone already.

Nearly all of the places listed were on the northside, so it was no help. At the moment I'm staying with my sister".

Kate "What we found was brilliant, its £50 a week and it's near college.

We waited outside for two and a half hours to get it. It took about two



Kate Walshe, 2nd Year, Aungier Street, Shane Reilly, 2nd Year, Aungier Street, Lisa Kelly, 2nd Year, Aungier Street

weeks to find somewhere and I spent about £50 travelling to and around Dublin looking"

Shane "The woman we rented the house from got about 80 enquiries from students.

We found it in the Herald, but we spent about £50 on an agency as well, and they were useless. A lot of the places we tried wouldn't take students".

Lisa "The DIT accommodation list was totally useless. I was one of the first people to get it, I was waiting outside the Students Union, but the

listings was all northside, and all around £70.

The only flat listed near the college was described as a three bedroom but when we rang it only one bedroom".

Declan Byrne, 2nd Year, Kevin Street.

"I'm still living at home in Leixlip, because accommodation is too dear, and there's a lack of it as well. I did look, but all I could find was a double room for £90 a week".

Kristian O'Neill, MA, Aungier Street. "I've got a good place at the

moment. It's expensive, but it's worth paying a bit more to have somewhere that's secure and a decent size."



Tips on rented housing

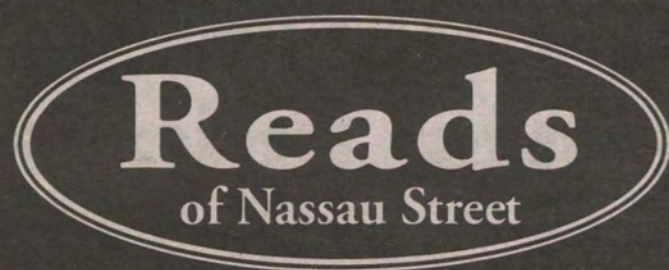
✓ It is important to remember that you may lose some or all of your deposit if you damage the property above normal wear and tear, if you leave before the lease is up or if you leave bills or rent unpaid.

✓ Always make sure you read the lease properly before you sign it so you know exactly what you are signing for.

✓ Landlords are legally obliged to provide you with a rent book, which is a record of rent and other payments made by a tenant to the landlord. It also contains other details concerning the letting of the property and is useful to ensure that there is no confusion.

✓ All tenants have a statutory right to quiet and peaceful possession as long as they pay their rent. Even our landlord does not have the right to enter the accommodation without the permission of the tenant.

✓ A landlord may however be entitled to enter the property to : survey it and to ensure that it is being maintained, to read any meter that may be installed while the tenant is present and in a case of emergency.



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A4 Plastic Pockets (Box100)	£3.00	£1.99	£1.01
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Pritt Stick (medium)	£2.50	£1.99	51p
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A4 Refill Pad (200 leaf)	£2.75	£1.99	76p
Helix Architects Rule	£4.25	£2.99	£1.26
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Partnership plans need more investigation, claim students' unions

By Lisa Deeney

MORE investigation is needed regarding public private partnerships (PPP) the Union of Students in Ireland and DITSU insist, as it has been revealed that DIT's new Grangegorman campus is being considered under a PPP agreement.

Public private partnership is an agreement between public sector organisations, in this case the Dublin Institute of Technology, and private sector businesses, which have yet to be confirmed. The idea of PPP is the first pilot project to reach the Third Level Market and it is gaining momentum quite rapidly.

"There is no reason why the Government shouldn't give the money to DIT, so we can build it ourselves," claims DITSU President Vincent Dooley. "It would save us a lot of hassle...Public private partnership is just a term used for a more complicated loan."

"At the moment DIT does not have the funds or money to finance the new campus... In the long-term it will have to be paid for by the college and we would save money by buying and paying for it now," he added.

The contract will involve tenders from the private sector. It is believed that the public company will raise the finances to construct the new

campus. It is expected to take seven to eight years to build the new campus. DIT may lease it for a period, expected to be about ten years. After the leasing period DIT will have the option to buy the Grangegorman campus back.

USI President, Julian de Sp-inn believes that more investigation into the concept of public private partnerships is needed. "The government at the moment has a huge budget surplus, so why does it need to use PPP?" he asked. "Also the issue of price controls needs to be addressed."

"The public companies are making an investment, they are making money. There has to be something in it for them



it has been revealed that DIT's Grangegorman campus is being considered under a Public Private Partnership agreement

to invest huge amounts into third level education," he added. "There is some future interest for these companies but we don't know what it is."

"It all depends on the individual plans... the universities and IT's must make sure that the rents can't go up. There is no need for private investment as the Government has the money to invest now."

DITSU President, Vincent Dooley recognises some good opportunities from a public private partnership. "If the Minister himself gets behind the project with all contracts signed and

negotiated then it will be built - student accommodation, sport facilities, a student bar. Everything we need will be done," he said. "Also there will be an option to buy back the land later on." He added that it may take three to four years until all contracts are signed, and even then, a further seven to eight until the campus is built.

In 1995, DIT commissioned architects Scott Tallon Walker to carry out a study on the new campus in Grangegorman. It came up with an ambitious blue print of £150 million to implement. Back in July, the Minister for Education, Dr

Michael Woods, addressed representatives of companies interested in participating in major educational infrastructure projects under the Government's Public Private Partnership initiative (PPP). The large attendance at the event included designers, contractors, legal and management consultants, financial institutions, facilities managers and other sections of the construction industry. The Government has already stated it wants to see rapid progress in the delivery of the PPP projects, but the word from DITSU and USI is that closer investigation is needed before any contract is signed.

Drop-out rates blow to engineering and computer courses

By Lisa Deeney.

TWO out of five DIT students will not graduate from their chosen course, a new study has revealed.

The DIT report reveals alarming statistics which indicate that the degree completion rate is the worst in the IT sector.

This drop-out rate is very worrying given the annual hype over the points system and the intense competition to get into certain faculties and courses.

Recent figures indicated that girls do better than boys in the Leaving Certificate so it will come as no surprise that in all the DIT faculties, female students are more likely to persist with their studies. On a gender basis, the report shows consistently higher female completion rates throughout all DIT colleges. The greatest difference exists in the Science faculty, where there is just over 17 per cent difference between male and female completion rates.

The study also highlights some surprising differences in the dropout rate in different courses. The Applied Arts faculty does better than expected, with a 71 per cent completion rate. But the biggest disappointment is in the faculty of Engineering, with a 50 per cent dropout rate, and a similar rate in the Business and Science faculty, with a 42 per cent and a 39 per cent dropout rate.

This has worrying implications for the national drive to boost science in universities and institutes of

technology. The study also reveals that Kevin Street had the highest dropout rate, while Cathal Brugha Street has the lowest.

The study, conducted by Project Directors Jill Barrett and Susan Lindsay, and researchers Maura Finnegan and Mark Russell, was a tracking exercise, where the aim was to follow first-year students who entered DIT courses in September 1994 until their departure from the Institute.

The question now is: what efforts are being made by DIT to curb this huge dropout rate? "We are hoping to have a more comprehensive student induction 'ice-breaker' programmes to help first years in their early days in college, and there is a need for a follow-up programme during the term as well", said Ms Barrett.

Ms Barrett believes the academic side of DIT should also hold some responsibility for such a huge dropout rate. "Each course committee should be directly involved in reviewing the quality of courses and they should be more responsible for the retention rates of their course... the bottom line is making sure students are facilitated if they want to move courses if they have made a wrong decision," she said.

According to campus.ie, it is now compulsory that tutors have to interview students wishing to dropout.

"We keep constant review of those non-completing students and we ask them why they decide to dropout,"

explains Ashling McHugh of the Faculty of Built Environment. "We follow through each year on that to try and establish the reasons for dropping out."

"This year, DIT's induction programme was specifically geared to encourage first-year students to come to us if they're considering dropping out," said Aisling. "All support staff, councillors, SU officers and tutors are working with us in addressing this problem."

The decision to leave a course should not be taken lightly, Ashling advises. "Students who are away from home can find themselves in a college where they know no one, and miss home. They may find themselves overburdened by subjects which they were unaware they had. It is a very confusing time for students, they are trying to get settled, find accommodation and may feel like a small fish in a big pond."

Vinny Dooley, DITSU President believes that is a number of valid reasons for such a high dropout rate in DIT. "A lot of it has to do with financial problems. A lot of first years do not know much about their course and the whole area of social acceptance - fitting into college is a large factor".

The peer mentoring programme is just one of the DIT initiatives that will try to reduce the huge dropout rate.

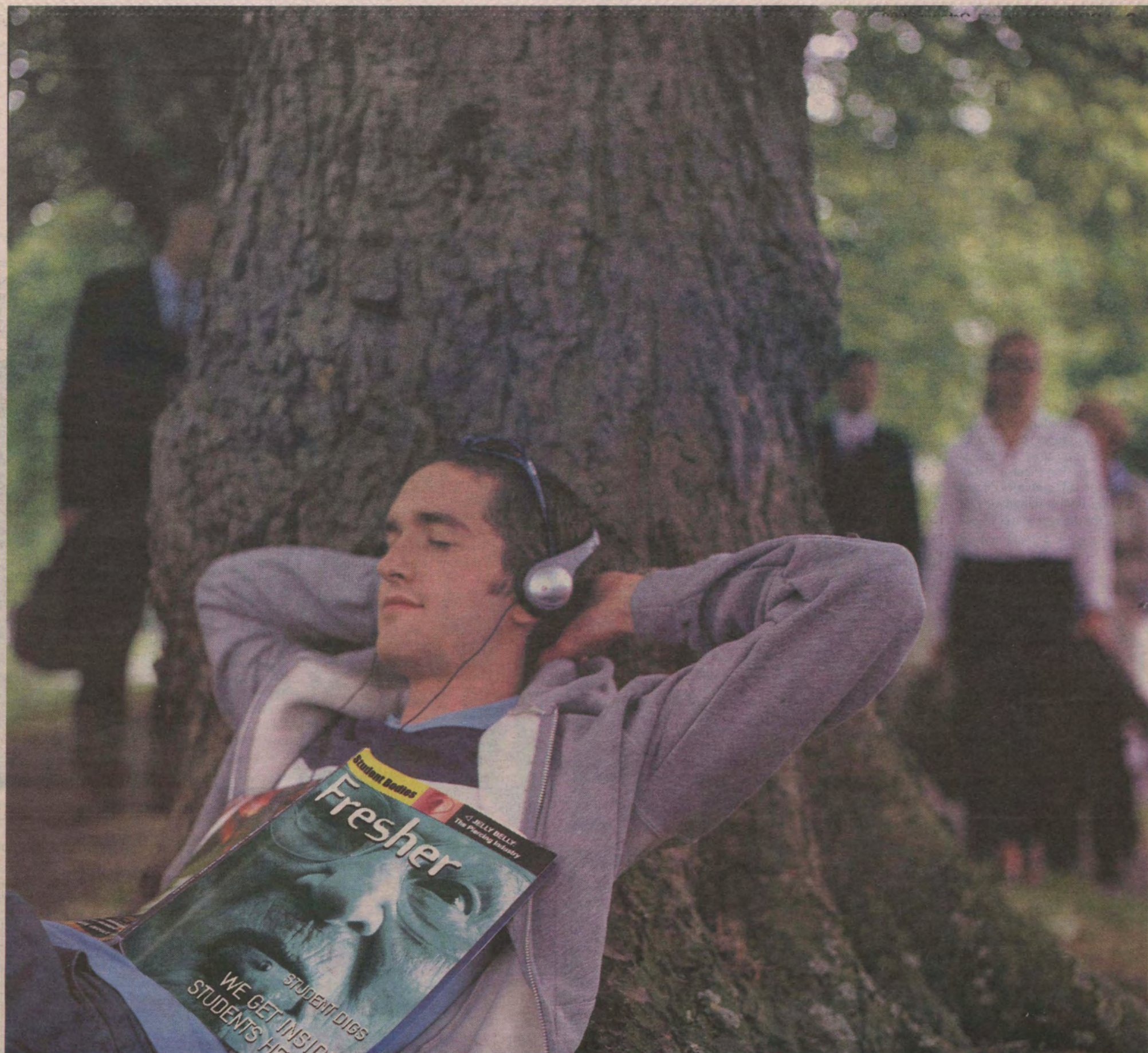
Not all students who opt out of a course are permanent dropouts. Many go on to other studies, but there is no way of keeping track of them.

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Freshers' week

Another Fresher's Week has come and gone, and in every DIT, the students are feeling the aftermath.

Missed classes, sore heads and unidentified bruises from the drunken stumbling abound.

After all, what better way to get a proper foothold in college life than to attend your very first Fresher's Ball (and second, and third...) and end up with a hangover that lasts for the rest of the week?

Of course it's not helped by the pub crawls,

guaranteed to keep your blood alcohol level somewhere around the "totally wasted" mark.

Photographs start doing the rounds showing you locked the arms of a complete stranger, or in some other embarrassing situation, like trying to flag down a squad car in the mistaken belief that it is a taxi.

You unsuccessfully try to blame it all on the alcohol.

Two days later, you find

you've signed up to a number of clubs and societies, in which you had absolutely no interest, and managed to miss the only one you really wanted to join.

For the more athletic among us, attending the DIT sports day seems like a good idea.

But it could have far-reaching effects for the less fit among us as we line up for the 1500 metres, white limbs on show, with optimistic

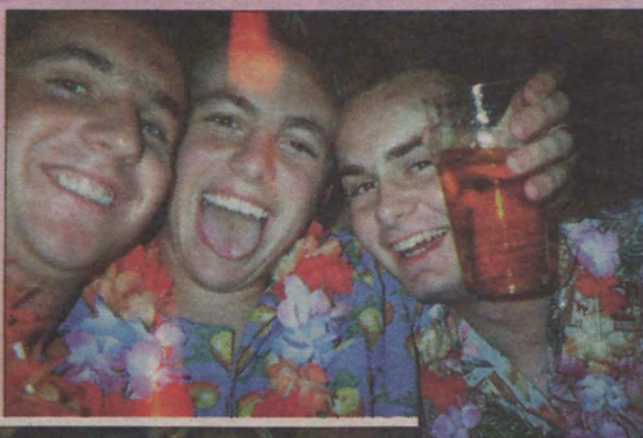
hopes of actually running the entire track, not being carted off halfway through by an ambulance.

Tip for next year: watch

out for the photographers; those pictures of you in your shorts and t-shirt, pounding up to the line in fifth place may come back to haunt you in the future. In the

meantime, check out the photographs on these pages, and pray, for your own sanity, that Rag Week doesn't turn out to be a repeat performance.

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The joys of public transport

YOU'RE just home from college, soaked and nauseous. An hour earlier, you boarded an over-crowded double-decker, had to stand for most of the journey, during which you were constantly thrown from side to side. You were squashed as passengers piled on, choked on the stale air and smoke and were about to faint when you glimpsed your stop through the fogged up windows.

Now home, you snap at your sympathetic flatmate, because you are not just miserable, but angry.

Apart from the horror you've just endured, you waited for 40 minutes in the rain for a bus scheduled to leave every 10 minutes, asking yourself: would it break the company's bank to splash out on a bus shelter? Sound familiar?

If you are a commuter with Dublin Bus, this is probably a typical journey for you. If you ever lifted the phone to complain, you may have ended your call in despair, being told that drivers won't work on Thursdays, Fridays or Saturdays. You suggest having a different timetable for these days, but don't bother to complain about the smoke, because you have seen a driver smoking himself once, and realise the company doesn't take this law seriously.

You give up and decide to use the DART. Big mistake! The DART is worse.

If you are a DART user, you will be familiar with that computerised voice often broadcast just before a train

Natasha Reid experiences the joys of travelling by public transport to and from college

is due, apologising for yet another cancellation due to staff shortages. When the train finally arrives, it's full and filthy. Due to the lack of attendants, a few teenagers are rolling joints while sharing a bottle of vodka, and a fight breaking out is always a strong possibility.

So Friday comes and all you want to do is escape from the mayhem.

This can be more trouble than it is worth! I spoke to one Aungier Street student, Georgina, whose train stopped as scheduled in a town in the West, but didn't pull out for an hour. There was no announcement to apologise for the delay, or attendant in sight to explain the hold-up to passengers.

As for the alternative, a journey with Bus Eireann is greater penance than Lough Derg, or so I've been told by Shane, a UCD student, who missed his grandmother's Month's Mind in Mayo due to the company's incompetence. His misery started in BusAras. "As I was about to throw on my bag, the driver shouted, 'We're full' and drove off leaving a dozen of us waiting in the rain. After half an hour, a

rackety minibus arrived to pick us up," says Shane, 18.

"The seats weren't properly bolted down and some gave way during the journey," he added. When they arrived at the half-way mark, CIE staff, who had no intention of bringing them any further, cursed at passengers. It wasn't until customers became emotional



In relation to complaints, the "put-up and shut-up" attitude of students is changing

that the inspector decided to send them the rest of the way. Shane arrived at his destination two hours late.

These stories may shock students who've grown up in countries where everything runs like clockwork, but they are nothing new to those of us who crowded onto ancient school buses as children.

So what do the authorities

say? Myles McHugh of Iarnrod Eireann states that services run punctually 90% of the time. "It's the nature of public transport that delays will occur." So if you don't mind that one in every 10 rail trips will be disrupted, Iarnrod Eireann is the service for you! In relation to complaints, the "put-up and shut-up" attitude of students

is changing. Many feel one voice won't make a difference, but realise that many voices will.

Most of the students I interviewed have phoned to complain about bad service; many wrote letters and filled in complaint forms.

As for me, I'm done complaining. I'm moving into town!

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But with the thousands of sites out there, it can be a slow process to find one that fulfils your time-wasting needs.

Check out this guide for a step in the right direction...

www.theonion.com

Claiming to America's finest news source, the Onion is good for a laugh, regardless of its newsworthiness. One of their top stories relates presidential candidate George Bush's horror at the \$200,000 salary for the job.

You can also read about the family that spends awkward, silent quality time together, if you care enough.

The Onion's first aid tips should probably be taken with a pinch of

A guide

salt, or else there's aid kit around corner cotton balls, Jar-J Chapstick, car bin cigarettes....

www.weeklyw

As if the print enough, the Weel available online.

The paper that brought you Batboy also contributes gems such as ghost chickens who has ruined the lives of a farmer and

Watch out Ibiza, here comes Crete

Crete – an island filled with history, with culture – and drunk tourists. An island of beauty, blue seas, white sands and all night parties. Ibiza watch out – Crete's after your crown.

The largest Greek Island, Crete is situated between Europe and Africa, right on the border of the Aegean and Libyan seas. In the summer months, the island is buzzing with visitors, all intent on living it up for a few weeks. And you could say they've come to the right place.



Seasonal business means that almost every second house opens up a taverna or restaurant for the tourist season. Some of these places stay open until six or seven in the morning, before they finally throw the stragglers out. The island has already been "packaged" into certain areas for certain tourists. Hersonissos is the domain of the Irish – bars boast names such as "Bailey's Irish Bar", "O'Donoghues", etc. One promoter told us that a few years before, these were Dutch and German bars but have since been changed to accommodate the large numbers of Irish people that are visiting the town.

But there's more to do on the island than drink. Most of the tour operators organise activities for their clients, ranging from beach parties and pub crawls to trips to the local aquapark. The ever popular beach party is like something you'd see on TV. Think Sky One's "Prickly Heat" and cringe a hundred times more to get an accurate picture what goes on. But since it's all in the name of fun, everyone joins in. Between party games and drinking alcoholic concoctions that would fell even the hardest drinker, let's just say that

there were a few embarrassed faces when the party games got going. One such game saw the male element of the group lying on their stomachs while the teams (made up of girls), each wearing a single diving flipper, walked over them, slapping them on the back as they went.

Of course, alcohol and accuracy don't go hand in hand, so there were one or two faces contorted with the kind of agony only men could know. It was also a chance for the girls to get their own back. Some of the more vocal men found themselves on the receiving end of a hefty smack – although that's not to say the girls would EVER do anything like that on purpose. No, no, it wasn't even in the slightest bit funny.....actually, now that I think about it, I did laugh a little. Okay, a lot.

Maybe it's something to do with the heat, but everyone seems to act out of character when they step onto the shores – and into the bars – of Crete. You know how it is, alcohol is consumed, spirits are high and the next thing you know, the DJ is laying down a challenge to anyone brave enough to the Full Monty. And I do mean the Full Monty. Imagine a pub packed with slightly drunk people and five or six men standing on the



bar, literally letting it all hang out, while they down a shot through someone else's smelly sock. Robert Carlyle and his flesh-baring buddies have a LOT to answer for.

But if bars and pub crawls aren't your thing, there are some other options. Crete is full of history, culture and archaeological sites. Since we'd spent one week lazing on the beaches and inspecting the local pubs, we decided that second week would be better spent exploring the island. If you lack a driving license, the only other way to really see Crete is to rent a moped. Tour operators

don't recommend this – there have been many accidents involving tourists in the past. In fact this was one of the first things we were warned about when we got off the plane. So to broaden our cultural horizons, we set off on the twisty mountain roads – and I'm not trying to be poetic here. Experiencing some of the lesser-used roads on Crete would guarantee that you'd never complain about the ones in this country ever again.

So now matter what you're looking for, this island is bound to have it.

New York state of mind

By Susan Barry

Twenty-four hours after arriving in New York, I began to see a new side of myself. I learnt very quickly that, in order to get what I wanted in the Big Apple, I had to be loud and confident; aggressive almost. Karen and I arrived in New York on a Saturday evening, and by the next afternoon, we had witnessed our first live demonstration of that well-known New York attitude.

Climbing into a cab with three relatives, we were astonished to hear another cab driver shouting at us. "You can't all go in that cab!" he raged, in what I excitedly recognised as a movie-like Bronx-Italian accent.

We were treated to a verbal tussle and a car chase down 1st Avenue as the cabbies tried to out-manoeuvre each other. Our experienced cousins were bemused by our shock and explained the other driver was annoyed because it was illegal to have more than four in a cab.

That's the first thing you learn about New York – everyone has an opinion they



think everybody else deserves to hear. The second thing that struck us was the extraordinary presence of colourful fibreglass cows on the streets; a phenomenon we were later to learn was called the New York Cow Parade (www.cowparade.com). The cows have been auctioned off, but they provided something interesting to write home about.

We spent two disheartening weeks of distributing resumes all over Manhattan, before settling into two waitressing jobs. I found a nice, high-class restaurant in South Street's Pier 17 and Karen was 10 minutes away in an Irish bar frequented by Wall Street's most elite Brokers.

Commuting from Queens everyday, we quickly adopted the haughty Subway persona of the pros around us. We mastered the "Untouchables" attitude and became bored commuters. That is, until we were treated to the most perfect view of the Manhattan skyline from the Number Seven train, and once again, we became over-

awed tourists.

It wasn't long before we started exploring the local bars and ironically, favoured the Irish bars over others. If Chinatown is the haunt of the Chinese, then Woodside in Queens could undoubtedly be renamed Irishtown. We got to know the barmen in several pubs. Declan entertained us with his card tricks, while Louis laughed at our less-than-sober behaviour.

Our favourite haunt, however, was The Beacon Tavern in Queens, where lots of "Full Monty" style craic was to be had with the bar's soccer team. Billy, the barman, took pride in reminding me of my alcoholic misdemeanours at every given opportunity, while Darren kept the house moving to some dance tunes when he was on duty.

Living in New York is expensive and although you can potentially earn a lot, you will have to spend a large amount. Cheap accommodation is difficult to come by. Visitors should organise accommodation before they go.

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WEBSITE REVIEWS

The last word in beer



Sites for students

With so many websites springing up, someone was bound to catch on to the potential for student-orientated sites.

Now there is a multitude of websites clamouring for our attention. The DIT Independent takes a look at some of the sites on offer for the student population.

Oxygen

The website that spawned no 54 (which, by the way is NOT the Irish Big Brother) also gives us freemail, travel articles and humorous features.

The drawbacks of turning 21, why Buffy is the best programme on TV and a celebrity agony column, courtesy of Mrs Shady, adorn this site, and find out what's really cool about 2000.

If you've been bitten by the travel bug, find the cheapest airfares out of the country with Oxygen's on-demand list.

Or if you're feeling inspired, share your travel tales with Oxygen users through the site's travel competition.

Budding comedians should check out the unilife section, which includes a jokes section that should make you the most popular (or hated) person in the pub, depending on just how well you tell 'em.

If you feel like giving the pub, and your comedy talents, a rest for a night, gigs, cinema, music and books have their own sections on the site, providing you with all the vegging options you need.

Campus.ie

A new addition to the student website sector is Campus.ie.

For your convenience, the site can be customised to your own preferences, meaning that when you register with Campus.ie, all that information you fill out will be put to good use.

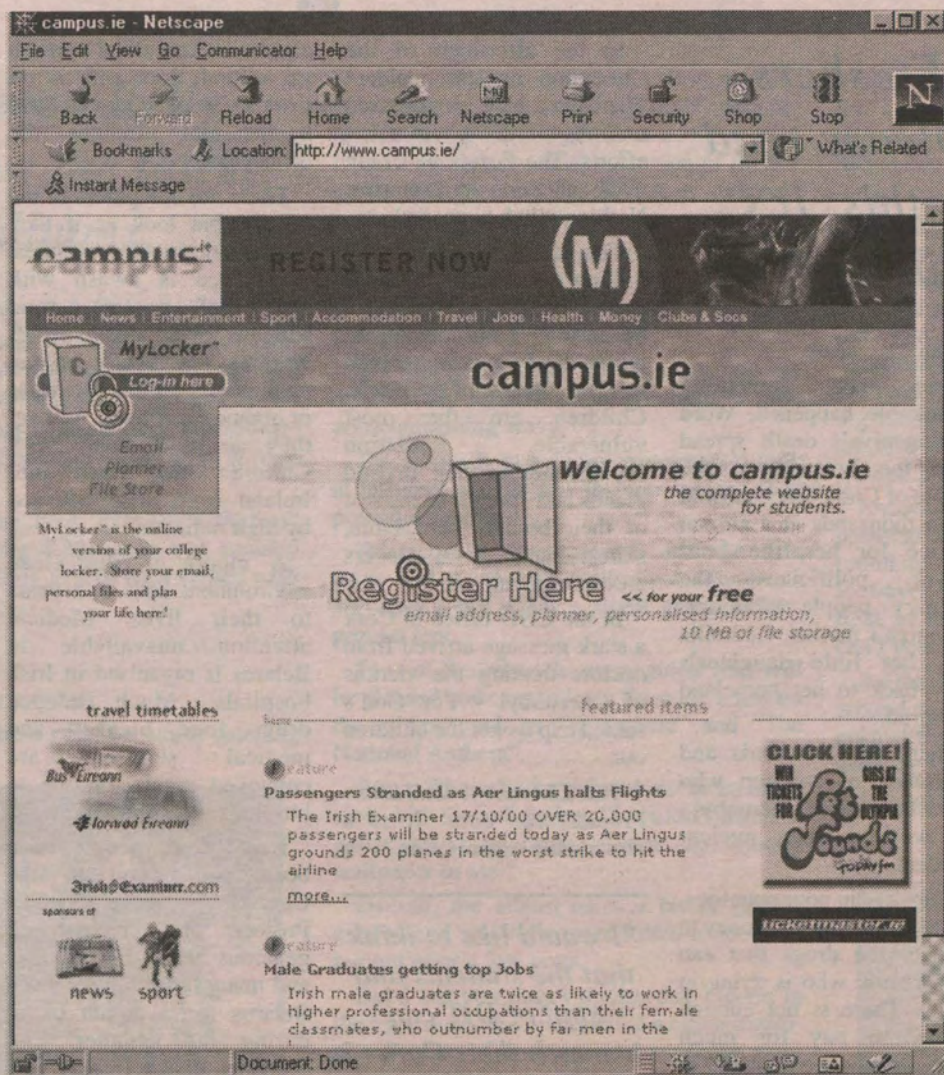
Another excellent aspect of the site is My Locker, where registered users can store files or keep track of their appointments and schedule.

So no more cursing at the computer when your floppy disk decides to eat the last week's work or that all-important essay.

And with Campus.ie email accounts, users get 10 megabytes of space for those must-keep emails.

Like all good websites, news, entertainment and sport are available.

The site has teamed up with the Irish Examiner to bring us all the latest news from around the country, and now there is no excuse for missing the last bus/train home - easy to use timetables



have been included on the site.

For those of us who need more help with our finances than being told how to spend it, a money section tells us all

about student taxation issues, how to plan finances for the year and debates the merits of UK banks versus Irish their counterparts.

Flunk.net

The result of an alcohol-fuelled night in Reynards, Flunk.net is up there with the best of the student websites.

A regularly updated news

section brings users the very latest in Irish news.

Of course, college news has its very own section, and for those intent on making the most of their college years, Flunk.net provides the latest Hollywood gossip and music industry minutiae.

Flunk.net also provides a range of forums and discussion groups for users, taking in everything from whether women want nice guys to DCU Freshers Week.

The diverse news features section asks if football jerseys are worth the expense; questions the integrity of the Olympic Games; and investigates the lack of sporting heroes.

Visit the ents section to find out about the flatmates from hell and how to deal with them - lets face it, most of us have been through rocky patches with co-habitators, regardless of how long we know them.

Tune into Flunk.net for guides on everything from finance to sex and contraception.

The law guide might come in handy for those who like to walk on the wild side; see the drugs guide if you are lacking in inspiration!

A complete guide to all the drugs on the market can be easily accessed.

Surf for fun

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The Onion's first aid tips should probably be taken with a pinch of

A guide to finding the websites that fulfil your time wasting needs

salt, or else there'll be many a first aid kit around containing alcohol, cotton balls, Jar-Jar Band Aids, Chapstick, car bingo games, cigarettes....

www.weeklyworldnews.com

As if the print version wasn't enough, the Weekly World News is available online.

The paper that brought you Batboy also contributes gems such as ghost chickens who has ruined the lives of a farmer and



his wife, the healing fingerprint of Christ and the fountain of youth - cells soaked in Jack Daniels and snuff juice apparently do not grow old.

If you have a problem, Dear Dotti will give you compassionate, friendly (ahem) advice, or if you need something a little more in the paranormal way, Serena and her psychic advice could be just up your street.

If all this isn't enough for you, the archive will yield such stories as "Top Scientist Says: Sicko Space Aliens are Stealing Our Women". You can't say we didn't warn you.

www.shockwave.com

Got some time on your hands? What better way to while away the

long college hours than play games on Shockwave's website?

No matter what your playing preferences, there is sure to be something here to hold your attention for more than a few minutes.

Arcade classics, old favourites with a modern twist and adventure games are all available. Raid cookie factories, go cyber snowboarding or take Lenny Loose Jocks on an adventure in the Australian outback - the choice is yours. If you'd rather spend your time more constructively (!) Shockwave also has several other channels, including shows and music.

www.2211.com/pop.htm

For those of you who can't get

enough of bubble wrap, visit this site. Virtual BubbleWrap is silly, but fun, and best of all, it's free.

Okay, for hardened bubble-wrap-poppers, there's something missing, probably the noise and the real bubblewrap.

But hey, it's one way to pass the time!

www.fosml.com/pregnant/index.html

Welcome to the internet's first pregnancy test. Yes, just by clicking a button, you can find out if you are expecting.

No more messing about with sticks and no more waiting.

And if that isn't good enough, the site will also tell you the gender and who the father is.

The reliability of the test is a bit dubious (as if!) - the father can be anyone from Boris Yeltsin, Bill Clinton or your boyfriend.

Not one to depend on, but amusing enough.

Evgeniya's story

S ometime ago, a little Belarussian girl was flown to Ireland by Adi Roche's Chernobyl Children's Project. Her name, Evgeniya - seven years old, quiet and very shy. She had spent six and a half years in hospitals, in constant pain. Her condition could not be diagnosed by her doctors. Every vein in her body was swollen. Despite her severe pain, Evgeniya always managed to raise a smile for her doctor.

Her treatment in Cork Regional Hospital was not easy. At first her doctors had to detoxify her body. It meant even more pain for the little girl. She could not even move in her hospital bed. Dr. O'Donoghue attends her every morning. He gives her lots of time, affection and encouragement. Evgeniya begins to respond to her treatment. She asks the questions any seven year old asks. When I grow up will I be able to have babies? Will the babies be like me? After a time Evgeniya is able to move around her hospital ward.

More than anything else, Evgeniya wants a Barbie Doll House. Encouraged by her progress, it is decided to wait to give it to her when she leaves hospital.

Evgeniya never got to play with her toy. She died. It was

*Freshers -
please read
this. It's
important*

not an easy death.

And then something remarkable happened. Word of Evgeniya's death spread from the hospital to the people of Cork. They showed up in thousands at a church service for her, the Lord Mayor, politicians, the ordinary people of Cork. Evgeniya's mother, Ludmilla took her little daughter's body back to her homeland for burial.

There are thousands and thousands of children who suffer because of Chernobyl - the world's worst nuclear accident.

They live in poor countries. There is not enough money to pay for the drugs that can help a child who is dying in agony. There is not enough money to pay for much needed medical equipment in hospitals.

In orphanages, children freeze in the winter because there is no money for heating and not enough blankets.

The World talked; Ireland responded

In the aftermath of the Chernobyl nuclear accident The United Nations promised millions of dollars in relief efforts. The European Union made all sorts of promises. Nothing much happened.

The radiation affects nine million people. The levels of cancer in the countries bordering Chernobyl are hundreds of times higher than levels in the rest of the world. Children are the most vulnerable.

Radiation accumulates in their thyroid glands and spreads to the rest of their bodies. Leukaemia, skin cancers, bone cancers are widespread.

In the CND office in Cork a stark message arrived from doctors treating the victims of Chernobyl - For God's sake, Help us get the children out.

The Chernobyl Children's Project was born. It is a remarkable organisation. You

*"I would like to think
that the students and
staff of DIT can
match their Cork
counterparts, not
least because this
entire project was
conceived in
Mountjoy Square"*

climb a rickety stairs to reach its second floor offices on Cork's Camden Quay. A local businessman donates the offices free.

There are computers in the offices that look as if they were made in the seventies. The place is awash with boxes of posters, food supplies for Belarus and staff working frenetically on yet another project to raise funds or organise a convoy. And yet they do great work here. Children are flown into Ireland from areas affected by high radiation.

A month in our clean environment adds two years to their lives. Medical attention unavailable in Belarus is organised in Irish hospitals. Much needed drugs, food, blankets and medical supplies are conveyed across Europe to hospitals and orphanages.

Local Cork people have been very good to the Chernobyl Children's Project. They have been generous with their money and many host children from Belarus for a month or so during the summer. The Students of UCC and CIT have been phenomenally generous.

Renowned for their ability to squeeze funds for deserving causes with great enthusiasm, they no doubt will once again get hugely behind The Freshers 10 K



Evgeniya - seven years old, quiet and very shy. She had spent six and a half years in hospitals, in constant pain

Walk. I would like to think that the students and staff of DIT can match their Cork counterparts, not least because this entire project was conceived in Mountjoy Square.

The Biggest Charity Event in Irish Student History

On November 16th 2000, we hope to have every Fresher in every Irish college and university taking part in a sponsored walk in aid of the Chernobyl Children's Project. Each Fresher will be asked to raise £75 by getting parents, brothers, sisters, relatives, workmates and friends to give them £1, £5 or £10 and fill their sponsorship card.

We want to raise over £1m. The project will have a huge

publicity campaign. USI have given their full and enthusiastic backing to the project and provided all sorts of resources to make it an outstanding success story by Irish students.

Julian de Spainn USI president and Rory Mc Daid - USI Equality officer are travelling the length and breadth of Ireland to promote The Freshers 10K Walk. Watch out for the posters, magazine and brochures in your college. Above all - please take part. One day in your life, could make such a difference, to the Children of Chernobyl.

Joe Mc Grath
Lecturer - DIT
Project Director- The
Freshers 10K Walk



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ALBUM REVIEWS

The last word in beer



One step better



Madonna - Music (Warner)

The latest offering from the Material Girl is the self-importantly titled *Music*. A woman of a generation, Madonna certainly has contributed to music but whether hers is the definition is debatable.

The follow-up to 1998's *Ray of Light* does, however, manage to go one step better but you still can't shake the feeling that you may have heard it all before.

European disco funk, pitch-emulated vocals, and muted breaks make you wonder if you are in fact listening to a slice of William Orbital.

Funny you should think that, as the album is mostly the product of the writing and production partnership of Madonna and French dance artist Mirwais Ahmadzai.

Thanks to Ali G and some funky up beats, the title track "Music" was an instant hit. Undoubtedly tracks such as "Impressive Instant" will also fare just as well on the mar-

Rebecca Kelly reviews the latest albums

ket with Ahmadzai producing.

However, the rest of the album fails to captivate the imagination and blends rather dully into one long session of piped elevator music.

The tune "What It Feels Like For a Girl" tackles the weighty issue of, er, what it feels like for a girl.

The uninspiring tune "Nobody's Perfect" makes you wonder if Madonna was actually apologising for your £15 of hard earned cash wrongly spent.

Rating: 5/10

Radiohead- Kid A (EMI)

You know an album must be worth listening



to when politicians condemn it. Nothing fires your curiosity more than Tony Blair citing the latest offering from Radiohead as being evil. Indeed, the controversial collection of melancholic melodies entitled *Kid A* is strangely perverse.

It is definitely a departure from the much loved guitar based tracks on critically acclaimed albums *The Bends* and *OK Computer*.

But that is not to say it's no good. Yes it's different but Radiohead are admired for their non-conforming ways.

The album is largely an experimental look at different sounds and textures moreso than potential singles.

"Idioteque", "Treefingers" and the title track *Kid A*, feature-synthesised drumbeats and dare I say it has a slight garage/underground feel.

Fans of Radiohead's angry guitar rifts will be pleased however to learn there are a few on the album, such as "Optimistic" and "The National Anthem".

But as Thom Yorke pointed out in an interview with Dave Fanning, "I couldn't listen to guitar music anymore, it was like bloody wallpaper to me."

Overall, the album takes a bit of getting used to and would be more suited to mellowing out after a few pints.

But I bet you didn't realise that hidden in the back under the disc itself is a rather unusual collection of drawings and psychotic ramblings such as "come on kids, the bodies floating downstream, the truck loads with machetes." Great stuff.

Rating: 6/10

Pearl Jam - The Point Theatre Dublin

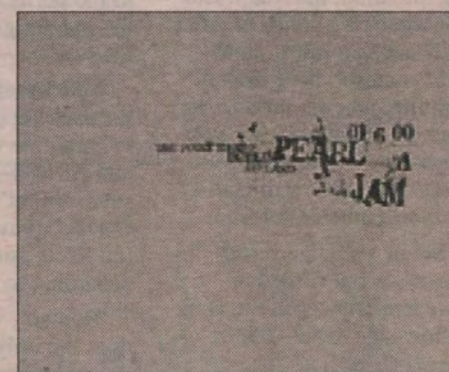
They say if you can't beat 'em, join 'em. And that's exactly what Pearl Jam have done by releasing their own concert bootlegs giving illegal copy merchants a run for their money.

The Seattle pearls of grunge jammed the Point back in June and if you were at the concert, you'll love this album. Vedder's manic vocals and the crowds devoted moshing is all captured perfectly on the double CD. All the old favourites are on it, "Corduroy", "Sometimes", "Daughter", "Betterman", the list goes on. Ed proves he is not just an ageing rocker and a pretty face by entertaining the crowd with anecdotes and the odd long-winded joke.

Encoring with six numbers, including my personal favourite, "Do the Evolution", PJ round up two solid hours of frenzied rocking. However, Vedder's finale was by far the highlight of the evening. It's just a shame you can't actually see it.

As the last strains of "Black" reverberated around the Point, he climbed onto the speakers and flung himself into the crowd. Oh to be standing below!

Rating: 9/10



Mono's student night

DIT reporters Anne Sharkey and Bernadette McGarvey check out Club Mono's student night

LATELY it seems that every City Centre nightclub is cashing in on the lucrative "student night" and Club Mono is no exception with their offering to this craze taking place on Wednesday nights.

Situated on Wexford Street next door to Whelans, Club Mono's convenient location attracts a great diversity of students from UCD, Trinity and DIT. One of the main incentives offered by the Club's student night is the all night drinks promotion with Budweiser, Bulmers, Guinness, and Vodka priced at a reasonable £1.50 per drink.

Entrance into the club is £6 and while this is a little more expensive than many other student haunts, Club Mono is the only club in the area which offers the all night drinks promotion.

Formerly the Mean Fiddler, Club Mono has undergone a few minor changes. The Mean Fiddler was one of the twenty bars run by Vincent Power who is also the main man behind concert venues and festivals including the infamous Reading festival and the International Fleadhs. He also staged the Homelands dance event in Mosney, Co. Meath with fellow club promoters.

Despite Club Mono's dedication to attractive DJ residencies, this only applies at weekends. On the night we visited, the music was extremely poor. The dancefloor was often deserted as the DJ churned out last year's hits and one to many songs from the eighties.

Afterwards, the DJ admitted he was having a particularly bad night and apologised for the noticeable gaps between songs. However, the drunken majority seemed blissfully unaware of the musical hic-cups.

The seats in the club are comfortable and secluded, which provides a rather intimate atmosphere in the club. The dance floor is of adequate size and the general spaciousness of the seating area permits dancing all over the club.

Overall the atmosphere at the club is laid back. The bar staff are extremely chatty and the bouncers are unusually friendly.

If you don't mind cheesy music, the cheap beer and the friendly crowd make for a pretty good night out.

Club Mono's student night runs every Wednesday night from 10.30p.m. onwards. Student I.D.'s are essential and the average age is 18 to 23.

Held during the week when trade in pubs and clubs is low, the student night offers cheap booze, cheesy music and an opportunity to meet talent from other colleges.



Entrance into the club is £6 and while this is a little more expensive than many other student haunts, Club Mono is the only club in the area which offers the all night drinks promotion.

Radiohead concert review

Rebecca Kelly sees what Radiohead have to offer in a big top at Punchestown racecourse.

Radiohead are famed for their non-conformity both in music and beliefs. Their latest album, *Kid A*, is a fine example of their complex, sometimes perverse, slant on life. It would therefore be sacrosanct for the band to perform in a "regular" venue with sponsorship from corporate drink giants.

Instead the circus rolled into Punchestown, and Radiohead performed their very own freak show under a big top. And what a great idea. Flat video screens suspended from rigging and excellent acoustics meant that even those at the back had a bird's eye view of the performance. Despite the rain sodden grass and overcast skies, it had a real summer festival feel with fast food and beer in neighbouring tents.

Remaining true to form, eerie violins marked the band's entrance. Yorke was in good spirits and his trademark vocals wooed the audience on new album tracks, *The National Anthem* and *Morning Bell*.

The new tunes went down well but the real crowd pleasers such as *My Iron Lung* and *Just* caused the tent to erupt into a moshing mayhem.

It's been three years and two albums since the Oxford five piece have performed on Irish shores but it was definitely worth the wait. Sampling more tracks from the breakthrough album *The Bends* had everyone in great humour and the crowd lapped up tracks taken from the critically acclaimed album *OK Computer*. At one point during all the excitement, the crowd literally toppled over and Yorke had to ask the audience to take a step back.

Lighters were pulled out in their hundreds for *Fake Plastic Trees* and *Street Spirit* and Yorke's hypnotic voice rang out over the swaying mass. But it wasn't only the band who performed that night. The crowd got their chance too with an impromptu rendition of *Happy Birthday* dedicated to Thom.

Encoring with *Lucky* and the ironically titled *Optimistic*, Radiohead once again proved to critics that the crowd loves a circus.

FILM REVIEWS

The last word in beer



Bjork takes to the dancefloor

DANCER IN THE DARK
(18s, Released October 20th)

Before any mention of Bjork's acting prowess is mentioned, you would do well to remember that in addition to winning the Palme D'Or and Best Actress prize at Cannes (an honour shared by, amongst others, Pulp Fiction, The Piano and Secrets and Lies) reception to *Dancer in the Dark* has been decidedly mixed.

In the same cinemas where it received a standing ovation, people booed and hissed at the screen.

Director Lars Von Triers - himself no stranger to controversy with *The Idiots* - steps away from the *Dogma* 95 film manifesto he helped write.

For those of you not paying attention, the *Manifesto* consisted of a series of strict self-imposed rules (hand-held cameras, no artificial lighting, no post-production sound...) written in the lofty hopes of creating a step away from the "artificiality" of most commercial films.

Set in a strange sixties America (but filmed in Sweden) *Dancer in the Dark* follows the dreary life of Selma (Bjork) a Czechoslovakian immigrant working long hours to save money for her son's eye operation.

The only giggles she seems to get out of life are musicals - especially anything involving tap-dancing.

However to make matters worse, she's going blind. Hence, "*Dancer in the Dark*". See? Whenever life gets a little too intense for Selma, she retreats to choreographed song and dance routines in her mind, as in *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*. And damn if they aren't catchy. If *Dancer* does nothing else, it'll (justifiably) shift a load of CDs for the Icelandic singer.

Is Von Triers a merciless sentimentalist, plucking the audience's heartstrings like a cheap banjo?

Or is he a strikingly original filmmaker, using Bjork's eerily dead-on performance to evoke powerful personal reactions from the audience?

Love it or hate it is too mild a precaution. I couldn't really decide on a rating for a film like this so make up your own minds.

** Or ****

ROMEO MUST DIE
(18s, Released October 13th)

Film buff Jamie Hannigan checks out the latest offerings in film

Already a star in his native Hong Kong, ass-whopping actor Jet Li first came to the notice of Western audiences when he kicked several shades of shit out of Mel Gibson in *LETHAL WEAPON 4*.

Wary of being stereotyped as the archetypal Asian hardnut, Jet Li broke away from convention and took one of the title roles in this elegant update of William Shakespeare's most poignant romance *Romeo and Juliet*. An incentive twist on the classic story, a lyrical song to the purity of true love and the indefatigable power of the heart...

Well, not quite. The two families "both alike in dignity" are now warring Asian and African-American gangsters. 'Juliet' is now 'Trish O'Day', played by Aaliyah (an R&B "superstar", according to the press notes).

'Romeo', via Jet Li now does the only thing any young suitor would do to win the heart of a fair heart from the other side of the tracks...

... Which generally involves kicking several shades of shit of just about everybody, oddly enough.

The plot involves something about him finding out who's responsible for the death of his irritating brother. However this would be

rapidly obvious to anyone with an IQ larger than their shoe-size as both story-line and romantic subplot take a back-seat to Jet Li's extraordinary physical ability at beating up the supporting cast.

There's not enough angst for a romance and not enough sense for a thriller, but if that's what you're after, then you're in the wrong film.

**1/2

LIBERTY HEIGHTS
(15s, Released October 27th)

Liberty Heights is one of those "Perfect 3-Star" films... It's not bad in any way you can put your finger on, it's funny, it has moments of poignancy, and it has a number of fine performances.

The whole thing moves at its own leisurely pace, and with a subtle, underplayed charm indebted to writer/director Barry Levinson's (*Rainman*, *Diner*) affection for the 1950s Baltimore of his childhood.

But not a great deal actually happens. Three distinct stories emerge from the upwardly mobile Kurtzman family.

Father Nate's (Joe Mantegna) "Burlesque" theatre is running out of steam and the illegal numbers rack-



Set in a strange 1960s America (but filmed in Sweden) *Dancer in the Dark* follows the dreary life of Selma (Bjork) a Czechoslovakian immigrant working long hours to save money for her son's eye operation

et is being squeezed by the government.

Older son Van (Adrien Brody) has his heart set on a seemingly unattainable WASP girl while Ben (Ben Foster) is smitten by Sylvie, the first black girl integrated into his high-school - this is 1954, remember?

The main theme linking the three stories seems to be how these three different generations of Jewish men are coping with the rapidly changing world around them.

Unfortunately, Levinson seems to be trying to put his story on a larger scale than it should have been.

Certainly, there was a gold mine of background material in the booming post-war period, but the film

suffers from taking the focus away from the family itself.

The father and sons are the strongest characters, but we see little of them interacting with each other, and the story suffers because of it.

That said, I have no doubt that quite a few who will love the sprawling structure and laid-back feel of *Liberty*. For me though, it adds up to the perfect:

RECOMMENDED

MEMENTO



Liberty Heights: The whole thing moves at its own leisurely pace, and with a subtle, underplayed charm indebted to writer/director Barry Levinson

(18s, Released October 27th)

I have a fear of giving too much away about this terrific noir thriller about lies, murder and memory loss, so in the best tradition of theological debate, I'll keep it vague.

Memento centres around Leonard Shelby (Guy Pearce), a former insurance-investigator whose sole purpose in life is to track down and kill his wife's murderer.

Trouble is, Leonard suffers from a bizarre form of mem-

ory loss, he can remember everything of his life before "the accident" but cannot recall what happened 15 minutes ago, where he is, what he's doing or where he's going.

All Leonard has as a guide are a series of Polaroid photographs, index cards and the disturbing tattoos adorning his body. He can't trust himself, let alone the people he meets. All he has left to remember is vengeance.

Make no mistake, this is not geared to the *Romeo Must Die* audience but rather for anyone prepared to actually pay attention to the screen.

Memento fishes in the same waters as films like *Angel*, *Heart*, *Liar* and *Open Your Eyes* but what sets it apart is the brilliantly unconventional structure.

The film opens at "The End" and works its way back.

Whereas something like *The Sixth Sense* put all its eggs into one big climatic twist (which most people had already figured out).

The twist in *Memento* is the film itself, constantly shifting the audience's expectations about characters and their motivations.

The chances of something coming out this year to match *Memento* for its striking originality are slim. See it now and then try to figure it out.



Romeo Must Die: There's not enough angst for a romance and not enough sense for a thriller,

Independent Horoscopes

Aries (Mar21-Apr20)

Ever get the feeling that something is about to happen but you are not sure what? Well that basically sums up your month ahead. You are suspicious of everyone and by default everyone is suspicious of you. The planetary movements in the first week of November are causing you a bit of a headache. You may be in for a small windfall mid-month but only if you keep your eyes open.

☐ Destiny points to an open gate.

Taurus (Apr21-May21)

Bulls take note. What you accomplish over the next month will lay the foundations for what you will achieve in the future. So accept nothing but the best. Saturn moves into your chart from the 16th and scrutinises every move you make. Single bulls may suddenly realise that the one you have been looking for is sitting under your nose. And here's you moaning about the lack of talent! Tut!

☐ Destiny is found inside a pink envelope.

Gemini (May22-June21)

The month starts with a few upsets as Mercury reverses through Saturn causing headaches in finance and business. But from the 16th on things will start to improve. After the 19th, be prepared for some serious loving! But one-night-stands are out - true fulfilment stems from serious relationships only.

☐ Destiny offers you a golden handshake.

Cancer (June22-July23)

The Aries Full Moon shines in your sign on the 13th and causes you to re-assess domestic and career options. Now is the time to make a definite decision about a choice you have been mulling over for the past few months. Money matters become the focus this month. Have you been over spending? You love to indulge in those frivolous delights but try to curb spending habits at least until after Christmas.

☐ Destiny heralds the arrival of an enigmatic stranger.

Leo (July24-Aug23)

Pride has always been your downfall but after the 16th you will have to grin

The DIT astrologer predicts what the month of November holds in store for students everywhere

and bear an unexpected upset in your life. But take heart! You learn quickly from your mistakes. So use the knowledge you have gained to your advantage. Love interests blossom towards the end of the month, ending November on a much higher note than when it began.

☐ Destiny warns not to believe a rumour.

Virgo (Aug24-Sept23)

Forge ahead with ideas, plans and dreams in the first two weeks of this month. Mid-month troublesome Mercury moves into Mars causing frustrating delays and setbacks. You tend to have a sharp, critical tongue. Hold it in check after the 19th as misunderstandings will cost you dearly. However, on the bright side, monetary matters improve greatly as November draws to a close.

☐ Destiny sees a red haired child.

Libra (Sept24-Oct23)

You have been bored and restless lately. Longing for changes gets you nowhere. Act on your desires this month. Libra luck is on your side and you won't be disappointed! The Full moon on the 13th heralds the end of period of bad luck. Now is the time to let your hair down and party! Enjoy the glitter and glamour of life around the 23rd, 24th and 27th.

☐ Destiny begins with the letter P.

Scorpio (Oct24-Nov22)

Love is the focal point this month. With Mercury moving into your sign around the 14th, temptation is on the cards. Should you choose to sample the forbidden fruits depends on your current state of affairs. Before you make any rash decisions try and solve the problems you have at the moment. Remember the

grass is not always greener on the other side. After the 16th you have six months to resolve a love or relationship problem that refuses to go away.

☐ Destiny is a red rose.

Sagittarius (Nov23-Dec21)

Venus oils the wheels of love and money this month and lucky old Sagittarians everywhere will score on both accounts. But before you get carried away in the pleasure of it all, tend to those nagging worries first. It work is left unfinished, the repercussions later will be serious. Remember a stitch in time saves nine. Having said that, you will have one of the best month of the year. So enjoy it!

☐ Destiny marks the end of a debt.

Capricorn (Dec22-Jan20)

With Saturn moving into Taurus on the 16th a spanner is thrown into the works. Everything was running smoothly up until now but you may have to redo some work you thought was finished. Life does this sometimes but November is

not all doom and gloom and the run up to Christmas sets the stage for bigger things to come in your life.

☐ Destiny says accept advice from a mother figure.

Aquarius (Jan21-Feb19)

November may not be your favourite month but this one certainly will be. Career prospects take centre stage and any monetary difficulties you have gotten yourself into will miraculously be resolved. Love also moves to the fore with a possible secret admirer announcing their existence mid-month. Lucky you!

☐ Destiny sees your name in lights.

Pisces (Feb20-Mar20)

You are by nature a trusting individual but this lovely quality can sometimes be used against you. Others may perceive your belief in mankind as gullibility and may try to pull the wool over your eyes. But you are no fool. Open your eyes this month and re-assess "friendships". It will ultimately lead to many personal successes.

☐ Destiny is a green car.



Irish Independent

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How would you like to Dance the night away with your three best friends to Salsa, Soul or Fresh & Funky rhythms.

DIT students simply write your name and address on the back of an Irish Independent masthead dated between Monday 23rd & Friday 27th and place it in the competition box located in your student union shop. 4 Winners will be picked on Monday 30th October in each of the 5 student shops.



Irish Independent

Student
Price Only



50p

New sport and recreation brochure, website

By Dermot Keyes

DIT's Sport and Recreation Brochure for the new year is a new venture by the Institute's sports Committee to outline the structures, guidelines, facilities and clubs that are available for the sports-mad students among us.

A glossy, easy to follow 38-page booklet has been assembled by the Committee with the assistance of the nineteen clubs that DIT currently boasts. Under the guidance of Committee Chairman Dr Declan Glynn, the sports clubs have put together a commendable booklet which, unlike ever before, lets students old and new see what our hurlers, soccer players, runners, etc get up to away from the lecture hall.

In his address, Dr Glynn said little time is required to state the value of sport in DIT.

"There is no need to stress the importance of sports in college - in promoting competitiveness, team playing and leadership skills, physical fitness and mental alertness which benefits scholarly activity; and of course the social aspect leading to firm friendships."

A welcome addition to DIT sport

For freshers, Dr Glynn remarked that sport's great socialising aspect is another reason to become club members.

"Students who are new to DIT find that involvement in a sport often, via a sports club, help them settle into college life by providing a wide circle of friends."

With sporting greats such as Stephen Roche, Steve Collins, Ollie Campbell and Brian

Kerr having all passed through DIT doors during their younger days, Dr Glynn hopes to see current students putting their "name up in lights" for future generations of students to admire.

The disjointed nature of the DIT sites and the distances that students travel to make training sessions has acted as a disincentive for the interested, rather than the dedicated sportsperson to join a club in the past.

Dr Glynn admitted that the college's excellent sporting

record is all the more commendable, "considering the current limitations on facilities at DIT," a third level institute which currently owns no outdoor playing fields.

"We intend purchasing the property of St Brendan's Hospital, Grangegorman," continued Dr Glynn. "This will be extremely advantageous for DIT sportspeople - it has existing playing fields and a pavilion which could be used immediately and will be developed over time."

The Brochure has also been added to the college website at www.dit.ie/admin/sport. DIT Sports Officer Caragh O'Buachalla told the DIT Independent that both ventures will be officially launched at a date yet to be confirmed.

Should students wish to find out further information about the college's various sports, the main figures in DIT sport are as follows.

Herbie McClelland - Sports Officer

Herbie has been a member of the Sports and Recreation Committee since 1981 and as a former Army Physical Training Instructor, has made his valuable know-how and experience available to thousands of students.

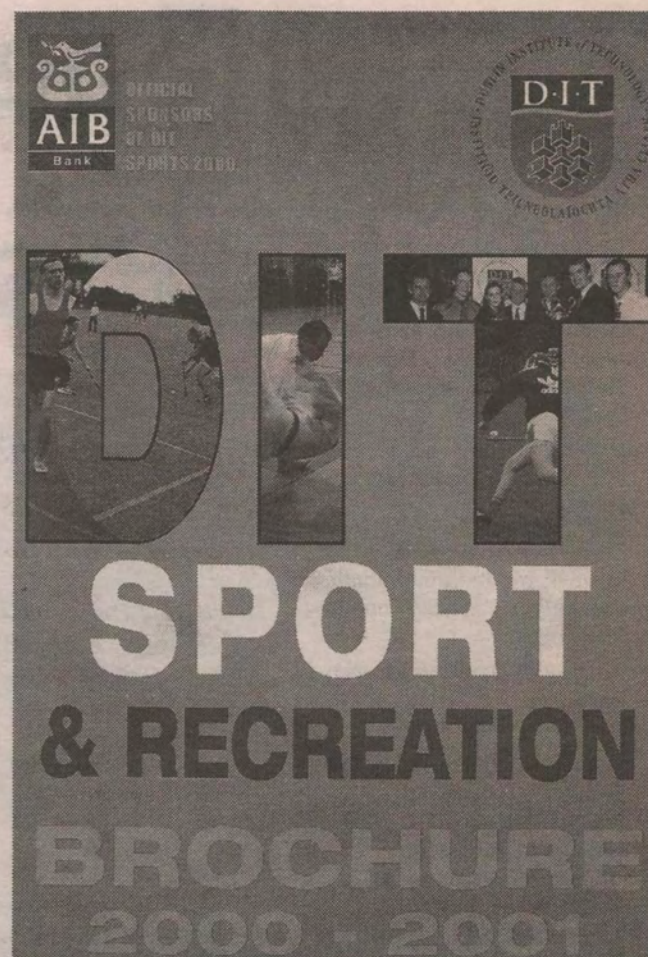
He is responsible for sport and recreation development at the Aungier Street site. Herbie also holds responsibilities for DIT clubs in athletics, camogie, gaelic football (both ladies and men), handball, hurling and soccer.

Herbie can be contacted at 4023042 (extension number 3042).

Caragh O'Buachalla - Sports Officer

Caragh joined the Sports and Recreation staff in 1998 and is currently studying Marketing at Mountjoy Square on a part-time basis.

She is responsible for the overall development of sport in Cathal Brugha Street and also holds portfolios for the fencing, karting, mountaineering, sub aqua, swimming and sailing clubs. Caragh can be contacted at 4024153 (extension number 4153) or at caragh.obuachalla@dit.ie.



Niamh O'Callaghan - Sports Officer

In her sixth year as a member of staff, Niamh is currently studying for a MBA in Sports Management, following on from her degree in Business Studies (Recreation and Leisure) received at Waterford Institute of Technology.

Responsible for sporting development at Mountjoy Square, Niamh looks after the needs of basketball (north and south), judo, olympic handball, rugby (ladies and men's) and volleyball (ladies and men's).

Niamh can assist students at 4024153 (extension number 4153) or at

niamh.ocallaghan@dit.ie.

Michael Whelan - Physical Education Lecturer

Michael has been a staff member since 1980 and was a soccer scholarship recipient in the United States where he studied a primary degree in Physical Education where he studied a primary degree in Physical Education and a Masters Degree in Physiology.

Michael can be Emailed at michael.whelan@dit.ie or phoned at 4024009 (extension number 4009).

Des O'Donnell - GAA Development Officer

Des joined the Sports and Recreation staff in 1999 and can be contacted at 4023424 or at des.odonnell@dit.ie.

Mad marathon thoughts



DIT student Dermot Keyes shares his marathon experiences

The Dublin City Marathon will soon be upon us once more and for the elite athletes, agile amateurs and those lunatics who wear ridiculous rabbit costumes, competing in such a gut-wrenching, vomit inducing competition is a magnificent achievement. I, Dermot Keyes, got the mad-capped idea to run next year's Marathon following Sonia O'Sullivan's Olympic exploits. (Bear in mind, it's still just an idea)

Alongside many of my

communications colleagues on the fourth floor of DIT Aungier Street, my stomach filled with a tension and nervousness that sport had not afflicted me with since the dying seconds of that Champions League Final in Barcelona (so shoot me - I'm a Man United man).

Sonia O'Sullivan was going for gold in Sydney and I was desperate to see her win a medal.

After the near miss of Barcelona and the sadness and agony of Atlanta, a

medal of any kind would be a magnificent achievement.

Just a few laps in and Sonia was moving... backwards.

"Don't worry, she's alright," I said, in an effort to convince myself that she was okay, that she would get it together and get back to the leading pack.

Denied the gold only by the greatest run of Gabriela Szabo's life, it was a magnificent effort and a personal triumph of the highest order.

Filled with that usual inspiration that greets any Irish sporting triumph (how many people took up cycling after 1987?), I decided it was time to lace up the old Asics shoes and resume pounding out the miles as I had in my Junior Cert to Leaving Cert era.

As I glanced down at my feet, over the slight speedbump in my midriff (i.e. my stomach!),

I realised that the biggest obstacle to attaining even a satisfactory level of fitness lay in the folding

diaphragm that had blossomed beneath my chest and above my manhood following four years of free pints and one Big Mac too many.

The only way that I and my free-flowing folds could part company will involve the belly beating "run that tum-off" challenge that only long distance running can provide my particular frame with.

So off I went. Shorts pulled on; lovely Daz-inspired, cheap imitation Nike socks; and a fully zipped-up rain jacket donned to sweat the bejaysus out of me.

I trundled up the avenue away from my digs and

believe me, did I take my time.

A previous running comeback in February had ended in failure, followed with a flu virus that moved quicker through my body than I had during those springtime jogs.

Thankfully, I've not been hit with the same affliction this time around.

Some three weeks and over fifty miles later, my speedbump is still there, but my legs have lost a rad of their lead-lined deficiency.

Twelve months to the 2001 Dublin Marathon and by then,

I hope the only speedbumps that I'll be seeing shall be those elevated strips that garnish so many of our capital's thoroughfares. Where's my Chariot's of Fire video.



Whitaker hopes for happier hockey year

IT HAS been said that Kevin Keegan filled his English players with "infectious enthusiasm" during his time as English manager, but in sport, even that isn't enough.

With international experience behind him, a welcoming demeanour and a palpable sense of dedication, newly appointed DIT Hockey Chairman Andrew Whitaker may succeed at college level where Keegan failed.

The inaugural hockey meeting for the coming year was held in Aungier Street on October 12th, where he set about his recruiting drive with great optimism.

Whitaker took the hockey portfolio as a result of the lassitude and apathy that marked DIT's hockey efforts last year. "Last year was a fiasco," commented Andrew.

"We only had eight players so we couldn't compete in any tournaments."

He put the lack of progress down to poor communication between the various sites and the committee. "Bad

Brian Healy and Dermot Keyes attended the first meeting of the year and discovered its motivated Chairman has high hopes

organisation was part of the problem - the club never got much publicity," he explained.

"So this year I decided to play a more active role. We have 25 people who have signed up this year and this should make all the difference."

The extended panel, composed of male and female students, should ensure no repeats of last year's problems, something the Chairman was keen to emphasise. "We are a lot stronger this year and there's a good chance we will make the finals in Crumlin."

This takes place on November 8th. To reach the final, DIT will have to dispose of Kevin Street and

Inchicore, something Whitaker is confident can be achieved.

Whitaker told assembled players that the presence of a healthy panel of players for each game was paramount to achieving success.

"I realise that people don't want to miss lectures all the time so we'll need the extra players for those days when some are missing. If you say you're going to turn up, then please turn up." He added that the team is for players of all standards, from beginner to veteran and stressed: "it's all for fun, it's not competitive."

Despite this, the ambitious Whitaker amusingly stated: "I want to win everything."

Three DIT players have made the top grade at college hockey following selection to the Irish college squad towards the end of last year. Whitaker himself, along with Keith Benson and Colm Brady have attained international honours.

A fourth player, Gary Ryan, has turned out for international trials and their high standard bodes well for DIT hopes this year.

Whitaker commented that no fixtures had yet been



The assembled hockey hopefuls at the first meeting at Aungier Street

pencilled in for the cup competition, which will be hosted by Cork Institute of Technology.

"The weekend will be funded by DIT so money and

transport is not a concern," he said.

Other issues discussed at the meeting included the election of officers to the hockey committee.

Nick Harris was appointed as Public Relations Officer, Keith Benson was selected as Treasurer and the absent Gary Ryan was "earmarked" by his Chairman for the vacant Secretary's position.



Andrew Whitaker, Chairman of DIT Hockey Club



"When I left you I was but the learner but now I am the master"



Out on his own: A rugby player strides for the try line



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